

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Kirkham Motor Sports

Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Kirkham Motor Sports Speeds Through Lean Implementation

Client Profile:

Kirkham Motor Sports builds aluminum-bodied replicas of high-performance racing cars. A former airplane factory in Poland, employing 40 people, now manufactures these high-quality cars. Final assembly is conducted at the company's Provo, Utah plant, which employs 14 people.

Situation:

As a garage start-up company, Kirkham Motor Sports hadn't relied on organization and efficiency to produce their cars. When the company grew and moved to a larger facility, employees continued to spend an excessive amount of time looking for tools and parts, activities that adversely impacted productivity. Training for new employees was also time consuming and confusing. Kirkham Motor Sports management became concerned about the company's ability to meet growing customer demand. The company's president had heard of lean manufacturing and was aware of the benefits an implementation could contribute to Kirkham's business. He asked the Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Utah MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

Utah MEP led Kirkham Motor Sports on a lean transformation journey beginning with an introduction to 5S, a workplace organization technique. Referring to "Sort, Shine, Set in Order, Standardize, and Sustain," 5S is the primary lean methodology for restoring order to a plant. Utah MEP's plan helped Kirkham Motor Sports eliminate tools and equipment that were no longer in use, designate specific places to keep equipment, and standardize and maintain these new procedures. Kirkham Motor Sports took the concept several steps further, implementing point-of-use storage and visual controls throughout the factory.

Results:

- Increased employee productivity by a factor of five.
- Created a more organized, cleaner, and safer environment for employees.
- Reduced training time for new hires.
- Reduced down time for equipment maintenance.
- Decreased required floor space by 20 percent.
- Reduced batch sizes.
- Reduced lead times by a factor of 20.

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Testimonial:

“The implementation of 5S and point-of-use storage has helped us to achieve some substantial positive impacts in our operation. The help that the Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership gave us and the tools that they provided to us have made these projects a success.”

Tom Kirkham, Owner